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ABSTRACT

PEOPLE (Pruebas de Expresion Oral y Percepcion de la Lengua Espanol) was developed as a test to help distinguish between a language difference and a language deficit in non English proficient (NEP) and limited English proficient (LEP) elementary Hispanic students. PEOPLE was developed, pilot tested in 14 school districts in Los Angeles County with 136 Mexican American students, and in field testing found to promise validity and reliability after editing. Subtests of PEOPLE include auditory association, sentence repetition, encoding, auditory sequential memory, and story comprehension (sample items of each are given). (CL)

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OFFICE OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Division of Support Services, Special Education/Special Schools
Dr. Robert Babcock, Director

"Non-Discriminatory Assessment: Formal and Informal Assessment of Limited English Proficient Children"

Presented by Sharon Mares, Program Specialist
Bilingual Assessment

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INTRODUCTION

The Office of Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools has been the recipient of Public Law 94-192 research grant funds in the area of non-discriminatory assessment. The Bilingual Assessment Project, funded by PL 94-142 funds and under the direction of Sharon Mares, has been created for the purpose of developing a Spanish language test battery appropriate for children living in Southern California. The development of this test battery, which is now called Pruebas de Expresión Oral y Percepción de la Lengua Española, has been in process since September 1979 and will continue until June 1981. The resulting test will be published as a research edition until future revisions can be made.

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The purpose of this test, Pruebas de Expresíon Oral y Percepción de la Lengua Español (PEOPLE), is to aid in distinguishing between a language difference and a language deficit for Non-English Proficient (NEP) and Limited-English Proficient (LEP) Hispanic students. The test is intended to be administered by bilingual certified or licensed language/speech specialists to children of Mexican descent between the ages of 6 and 10 years of age.

PEOPLE was developed in response to needs expressed by Language/Speech Specialists at the Office of the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools. In their work with language handicapped children who speak predominantly Spanish or who speak English, but demonstrate varying degrees of language handicap in their native language of Spanish, these specialists were unable to reliably assess Hispanic students' language problems. Their expressed need was for an appropriate standardized language test that assessed expressive and receptive language abilities of elementary school children. To be appropriate it was recognized that the instrument must reflect the lexical and grammatical preference, the culture and the predominant socioeconomic level of the region. The above requirements help to provide a less biased instrument, provided that the instrument is found to be both valid and reliable.

Contributing Staff

A variety of resource people have been utilized to assist in the development of this test battery. Sharon Mares, the Project Manager and an employee of the Office of the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, is the principal author of this instrument. She has worked with handicapped Hispanic children in both clinical and school settings. She has an M.A. in speech pathology, is a licensed speech pathologist, and has completed undergraduate work in Spanish and French.

Dr. Allen Toronto from Brigham Young University was one primary consultant. His background is in Speech Pathology, the Spanish language and culture, and test development. He assisted by collaborating in the development of the research design, reviewing the initial test items, and revising the pilot and field test versions.

Dr. Jacqueline Kiraithe, California State University at Fullerton, has been especially helpful. She is a Spanish linguist with extensive experience in Bilingual Education, consulting to school districts in Southern California. Her practical knowledge gained from working with school districts with bilingual education and English as a Second Language Programs has strengthened the test item content because she has up-to-date knowledge of language used by children in the school setting.

Dr. Dale Russell of the Division of Program Evaluation and Research and Pupil Services at the Office of the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, reviewed the research design, coordinated the data processing and conducted the statistical analysis. His consultation has helped to assure that appropriate procedures for determining test reliability and validity are followed.

Seventeen Language/Speech Specialists have participated to date in various stages of the test development. In the initial stage, the Language/Speech Specialists participated in writing test items for the five subtests. Test item content was taken from life contexts as well as more "academic" sources. The test items were composed of vocabulary obtained from speech sampling of Mexican-American children. Vocabulary from Spanish textbooks was also used. These same Language/Speech Specialists also administered the pilot and field test to a sample of 538 Mexican American students.

Many other professionals have assisted in the development of this test. Program Consultants, Program Specialists and Program Administrators with the Office of the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools have aided in defining and re-defining the diagnostic needs of teachers and Language/Speech Specialists working in the educational field.

Stages of Test Development

The development of PEOPLE is being accomplished in four phases, all of which will be completed by June 30, 1981. Phase I involved the accumulation of test items by the Language/Speech Specialists. These items were evaluated, revised and organized into five subtests.

Phase II of the development of PEOPLE involved pilot testing in 14 school districts in Los Angeles County. The purpose of this phase of the project was to verify that the items generated were appropriate linguistically, cognitively and culturally.

Phase III of PEOPLE involved the field testing. The purpose of this phase was to gather data for statistical analysis. Samplings of students were selected at yearly increments from ages 6 to 10. Data from the analysis was used to order the items, to eliminate inappropriate items, and to guide the editing of weak items to make them more valid and reliable.

Phase IV will occur in the 80-81 school year. The purpose of this phase is to gather normative data from a cross section of Southern California students between the ages of 6 to 10 years, to establish norms, and to determine test reliability and validity.

To assure that the sample of students is representative of the Hispanic students attending elementary schools, districts throughout Southern California were invited to participate in the standardization. At present, 35 school districts throughout Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Barbara, Imperial, and Orange Counties have participated in the norming process.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBTESTS

PEOPLE has five subtests which reflect a variety of linguistic tasks. These subtests have similar English and/or Spanish counterparts in such widely used tests as the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities and the Del Rio Language Screening Test. The subtests of PEOPLE have been designed to sample receptive and expressive language abilities.

Auditory Association

The format for auditory association is similar to that of the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities. However, the items were originally created to reflect the linguistic uniqueness of the Spanish language. In this subtest, an analogy is stated (e.g., María es una niña, y Juan es (un niño). The child is expected to supply the appropriate word at the end of the analogy. The analogies increase in complexity as the test continues. Samples of correct and incorrect responses are presented in the test manual. Regional dialect differences and sociolinguistic usage have been considered in identifying acceptable and unacceptable responses.

Sentence Repetition

In the sentence repetition subtest, sentences are orally presented to the child. The child is expected to respond by repeating the sentences verbatim. The grammatical complexity of the sentences has been restricted with sentence length being increased as the subtest progresses.

Encoding

In the encoding subtest, a child is asked to generate a response to a question by naming an object which appropriately does what the question calls for (e.g., ¿Qué cosa usas para comer?). The child is required to express noun responses that relate to functions. Samples of correct and incorrect responses have been provided in the test manual. Regional dialectical differences and sociolinguistic usage have been considered in these lists.

Auditory Sequential Memory

This subtest tests the child's ability to recall from memory an increasing number of objects. The auditory sequential memory subtest presents a series of commands of increasing length. Ten environmental objects are placed in front of the child. The child is required to indicate by pointing to these objects (e.g., Enséñame...zapato ... pelota). The commands become increasingly longer as the subtest progresses.

Story Comprehension

The story comprehension subtest provides a series of stories which are read aloud to the child. Following the presentation of the story, a series of questions are asked by the administrator (e.g., Qué, Cuándo, Quién, Cómo, and Dónde). The child is required to respond appropriately to the question by recalling the information presented in the story. The stories increase in length and sematic complexity. This subtest assesses the child's ability to comprehend the story, recall the information presented in the story, and express an appropriate response to the question.

ITEM DEVELOPMENT AND PILOT TEST

As stated in the introduction, PEOPLE is being developed in four phases. During Phase I, a corpus of 500 items were gathered. These items were reviewed for linguistic and cultural appropriateness by Drs. Allen Toronto and Jacqueline Kiraithe. After this review, 250 items were selected for the pilot study. These items were intuitively ordered according to their level of difficulty.

The pilot test, Phase II, was then administered to 136 Mexican American students, who were found to meet the following population descriptors:

1. spoke 75% or more in their home and/or were classified as Non-English Proficient or Limited English Proficient by their respective school district.

2. were in a regular education classroom with predominately bilingual students.

3. were informally assessed as being normal in their language development process by a credentialed language/speech specialist and classroom teacher.

4. were living in communities which were predominatly low-socioeconomic areas.

5. were of Mexican descent, as opposed to other Hispanic origins.

FIELD TEST

The third phase, the field test, was initiated after the results from the pilot test were analyzed. The items were re-evaluated and revised, with deletions and changes being made where appropriate. The resulting field test had a complement of 175 items: 8 stories with 34 questions total, 41 association items, 25 encoding items, 12 auditory sequential memory items and 36 sentence repetition items. The field test battery was then administered to 402 Mexican American children who met the above mentioned population descriptors.

Data from the field test were analyzed using a variety of procedures to estimate the test reliability and validity. To examine item reliability, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) update release 7.0 reliability procedures were used.[1] In addition to those procedures, item-to-total correlation coefficients were computed using the Pearson method to show the relationships of individual items to the total test scores. Pearson correlations also were conducted to examine the degree of subtest overlap.

Validity of the test was established primarily through content inspection by recognized authorities. In addition, descriptive statistics were obtained utilizing the SPSS "breakdown" procedure to examine means and variance of respondent groups by age and sex.

[1] Nie, N.H. et. al., Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, second edition, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1975

Analysis of variance using a factorial model was employed to examine interaction among ages and sexes of respondents. Since no interaction was observed, one-way ANOVA's were used to test the developmental separation of the age groups sampled. These preliminary data clearly commend the test as promising to have high reliability and validity following the editing which has been based on the analysis. A complete explanation of the outcome of these procedures and factor analysis procedures will be contained in a technical supplement to the final test "administration Manual".

STANDARDIZATION

The PEOPLE test is currently being standardized throughout Southern California on Mexican/Mexican American students between the ages of six and 10 years, who speak Spanish only or speak a limited amount of English. The norming sample will be approximately 1,000 students. Retest will be completed on approximately 300 students who will be chosen using a table of random numbers. Inter- and intra-examiner reliability will be computed for all field researchers. The completed norms will be represented as scaled scores. Eight different norm tables representing six month age intervals beginning with age six years-zero months to age nine years-eleven months will be available to aid in interpreting the test results.

Samples of Test Items: Story Comprehension

This subtest has eight stories which increase in complexity and length as the subtest progresses. The stories are read aloud by the examiner, who then asks questions of the child. The questions are all content or informative type questions that tax the child's memory as well as the child's comprehension.

Three of the stories are presented in this paper. They represent the first, middle and last stories present in the test. These stories have been translated into English for those in the audience who do not speak Spanish. These translations are not intended to be used as an English version, since the English translations will not be appropriate for English speaking students. See examples of these items on pages 8 and 9.

Auditory Association

This subtest has thirty-five items. Some of the items are analogies and some are opposites. The vocabulary in the items has been judged as being appropriate for Mexican/Mexican Americans living in Southern California. Each item has examples of correct and incorrect responses. These examples were gathered during the pilot and field test phases of the test standardization. Some of the examples represent dialect differences in vocabulary used by Mexican speakers. The child is not penalized for using more "colloquial" vocabulary as long as the concept is semantically synonomous.

The analogy is read aloud by the examiner, who pauses at the end of the analogy to indicate that a word needs to be added to the sentence. The items can be repeated once. See the examples of the test items in Spanish and English on page 10.

Sentence Repetition

This subtest has thirty sentences or items. The sentences are read aloud to the child who must then respond by repeating the sentences verbatim. The sentences increase in word length as the subtest progresses. The grammatical complexity of the sentences also increases to a mimimal degree. The grammatical elements of the sentences represent those that are commonly used by normal Spanish speakers. This task taps memory as well as comprehension. Test item examples are found on page 11.

Auditory Sequential Memory

This subtest has twelve items which a cummulative scoring method providing a raw score of 54. The presentation of this subtest requires that the administrator present the item stimulus in a uniform rate of one word per second. The test kit provides ten environmental objects. These objects are place in two rows in front of the child. The administrator asks the child to point to a sequence of three, four, five, six and seven objects in a row. The child has to retain the entire sequence and point to the objects in the sequence presented after the administrator has read the stimulus. This subtest assesses the child's ability to retain and reproduce a series of unrelated verbal stimuli by a pointing response. Samples of these items are found on page 12.

Encoding

This subtest has twenty items. The purpose of this test is to assess the child's name-finding ability. It is a direct word-finding task for nouns. The administrator presents a question to the child who is expected to respond by supplying a verbal response. The test manual provides examples of correct and incorrect responses for each items. These examples were gathered during the pilot and field test stages of the study. The examples represent differences in the dialect of a variety of different Mexican/Mexican American regions. See page 12 for the examles of these test items.

SPANISH

Demonstration: María se puso un vestido nuevo. Luego fue a la escuela.
¿Qué se puso María?
¿Adónde fue María?

Demonstration: Juan escribió una carta. Se le mandó a su abuelita.
¿Qué escribió Juan?
¿A quién le mandó la carta?

A. Benito vio unas flores muy lindas en el jardín. Las recogió y se las dio a su mamá.

1. ¿Qué vio Benito en el jardín?

2. ¿Qué hizo Benito con las flores?

E. Un gran perro cazaba un gato. El gato entró en una cueva donde vivía un montruo. "¡Ayúdeme, señor monstruo!" gritó el gato. "Por favor, escóndame de aquel perro terrible." "Con much gusto," replicó el monstruo, y inmediatamente se tragó el gato entero.

15. ¿Quién cazaba el gato?

16. ¿Dónde entró el gato?

17. ¿Qué le dijo el gato al monstruo?

18. ¿Qué hizo el monstruo?

ENGLISH

Demonstration: Maria put on a new dress. Then she went to school.
What did Maria put on?
Where did she go?

Demonstration: Juan wrote a letter. He gave it to his grandmother.
What did Juan write?
Who did he give it to?

A. Benney saw some pretty flowers in the garden. He picked them and gave them to his mother.

1. What did Benney see in the garden?

2. What did Benny do with the flowers?

E. A big dog stalked a cat. The cat entered a cave where a monster lived. "Help me Mr. Monster!" shouted the cat. "Please, hide me from that terrible dog." "With great pleasure," responded the monster, and immediately swallowed the cat whole.

15. Who stalked the cat?

16. Where did the cat enter?

17. What did the cat say to the monster?

18. What did the monster do?

SPANISH

H. Un día de verano Marcos y su amigo Juan decidieron visitar el museo. Un policía les dirigió al gran edificio. Los niños pasaron todo el día examinando las antiguas armas y herramientas. De repente, los dos muchachos se dieron cuenta que estaban solos en el museo. La puerta ya estaba cerrada. No encontraron otra salida. Oyeron los pasos de alguien que se acercaba. Los dos amigos no se atrevían a moverse. Juan estaba a punto de gritar cuando Marcos dio un gran suspiro. Acabó de entrar el mismo policía que les había ayudado en la mañana. El hombre se sonrió y les dijo agradablemente que ya no debían estar en el museo.

30. ¿Adónde fueron Marcos y Juan?

31. ¿Qué examinaron en el museo?

32. ¿Quánto tiempo pasaron los dos niños en el museo?

33. ¿Qué oyeron los dos niños cuando se encontraron solos en el museo?

34. ¿Con quién se encontraron los niños al final?

ENGLISH

H. One summer day, Mark and his friend John decided to visit a museum. A policeman directed them to a big building. The boys spent the entire day examining the ancient arms and tools. All of a sudden the two boys found themselves alone in the museum. The door was already closed and they did not find another exit. They heard the someone's footsteps coming towards them. The two friends did not dare move. John was at the point of shouting, when Mark gave a big sigh. The same policeman that had helped them this morning had entered. The man smiled and politely told them that they shouldn't be in the museum.

30. Where did Mark and John go?

31. What did they examine in the museum?

32. How much time did they spend at the museum?

33. What did the boys hear when they found themselve alone?

34. Who did they meet up with in the end?

AUDITORY ASSOCIATION

SPANISH	ENGLISH
1. Un ratón es chiquito, un elefante es_____.	1. A mouse is little, an elephant is_____.
2. Llevas zapatos en los pies, llevas un sombrero en_____.	2. You wear shoes on you feet, you wear a hat on your_____.
3. El perro corre, el pájaro_____.	3. A dog runs, a bird_____.
4. La nieve es blanca, el zacate es_____.	4. Snow is white, grass is _____.
11. Una piedra está en la tierra, una nube está en_____.	11. A rock is on the ground, a cloud is in the____.
12. Los animales tienen patas, y las personas tienen_____.	12. Animals have feet, people have _____. NOTE: Spanish has different labels for animal feet and "people" feet.
13. El niño es joven, el abuelo es_____.	13. A boy is young, a grandmother is_____.
14. Lloras cuando estás triste, te ríes cuando estás_____.	14. You cry when you are sad, you laugh when you are_____.
32. Los animales tienen pieles, los pájaros tienen_____.	32. Animales have fur, birds have_____.
33. Un oso vive en el bosque, un tigre vive en_____.	33. A bear lives in the forest, a tiger lives in_____.
34. Un callejón es angosto o estrecho, la carretera es_____.	34. An alley is narrow, a highway is_____.
35. El tigre es salvaje, el gatito es_____.	35. A tiger is savage (wild), a kitten is_____.

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15

SENTENCE REPETITION

SPANISH	ENGLISH	IMPORTANT CONTENT (number of syllables for Spanish only)
Demonstration:		
Vamos a tu casa.	Let's go to your house.	6 syllables
Dame el libro rojo.	Give me the red book.	7 syllables
1. Vamos a la misa los domingos.	We go to mass on Sundays	10 syll. 1st person plural, present indicative
2. En verano vas a la playa.	In summer, you go to the beach.	9 syll. 2nd per., pres. indic.
3. ¿Qué te gusta más de la comida?	What food do you like best? or What do you like best about dinner?	10 syll., what question
4. La niña ha comprado pan y leche.	The girl has bought bread and milk.	12 syll., 1st. per., past perfect (perf.) tense
5. En primavera vemos muchas flores.	In the spring, we see many flowers.	11 syll., 1st. per. pl., pres. ind.
6. Mi vecino está buscando su perro.	My neighbor is looking for his dog.	3rd per., pres. prog. 13 syll.
7. Es peligroso caminar en el hielo.	It is dangerous to walk in the ice.	13 syll., 3rd. per., copula infinitive, prep.phr.
8. La maestra de música viene a clase hoy.	The music teacher comes to class today.	14 syll., 3rd. per.sing.
9. El libro está encima de la mesa negra.	The book is on top of the black table.	14 syll., copula, prep. phr.
10. Quítate los zapatos antes de acostarte.	Take off your shoes before going to bed.	14 syll., imperative
11. ¿A cuánto han vendido las manzanas y las peras?	For how much have they sold the apples and pears?*	wh/question, past perfect 15 syll.
12. Papá habia leído el libro hace mucho.	Pop had read the book a long time ago.	16 syll., pluperfect
13. La tienda donde compré el pan y el queso es grande.	The store where I bought the bread and cheese is big.	17 syll., embedded sent. sub. clause (adj.)
14. Cuando nos acostamos, mamá nos cuenta un cuento.	When we go to bed, Mommie tells us a story.	18 syll., indep. clause

* Some sentences are not translatable and may sound very awkward in English.

AUDITORY SEQUENTIAL MEMORY

SPANISH	ENGLISH
1. Enséñame...libro, carro, muñeca *	Show me...book, car, doll
2. Enséñame...cuchara, zapato, llave	Show me...spoon, shoe, key
3. Enséñame...libro, pelota, peine, carro	Show me...book, ball, comb, car
6. Enséñame...llave, muñeca, peine, taza, avión	Show me...key, doll, comb, cup, airplane
7. Enséñame...pelota, cuchara, taza, carro, libro, llave	Show me...ball, spoon, cup, car, book, key
10. Enséñame...cuchara, zapato, muñeca, llave, libro, taza, pelota	Show me...spoon, shoe, doll, key, book, cup, ball

* The articles and conjunctions have been omitted purposefully so as not add unnecessary information to the task.

ENCODING

1. ¿Qué cosa usas para secarte?	** What thing (object) do you use to dry yourself?
2. ¿Qué cosa usas para cortar papel?	What thing (object) do you use to cut paper?
3. ¿Qué cosa usas para barrer el piso?	What thing (object) do you use to sweep the floor?
10. ¿Qué cosa usas para sacar fotos?	What thing (object) do you use to take pictures?
15. ¿Qué cosa usas para cortar madera?	What thing (object) do you use to cut wood?
18. ¿Qué cosa usas para cultivar la tierra?	What thing (object) do you use to cultivate the the earth?
20. ¿Qué cosa usa un ciego para caminar sin tropezar?	What does a blind man use to help him walk without stumbling?

**"Thing" is a direct translation from Spanish for the word "cosa". The word "object" would be more appropriate for English. It was necessary to specify that a "thing" was required. Otherwise, many children tended to supply body parts as their response.